



Ontario Agencies Supporting Individuals with Special Needs
Agences ontariennes de soutien pour les personnes qui ont des besoins spéciaux

January 15, 2007

The Honourable Madeleine Meilleur
Minister of Community and Social Services
6th Floor Hepburn Block
80 Grosvenor Street, Queens Park
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1E9

Madame Minister,

I am writing to affirm OASIS' support for the Government's initiative to transform the developmental services sector in Ontario.

The 124 Transfer Payment Agency members of OASIS - which provide high quality services and supports for thousands of individuals in communities in all regions of Ontario - have strongly welcomed the Government's commitment to modernize and strengthen the sector. On their behalf, I urge you and your colleagues to accord priority to bringing the Ministry's final document outlining the details of this important initiative forward, as soon as possible.

The Transformation project presents a major opportunity to introduce important, indeed overdue, changes to make the service delivery system more effective and better able to enrich the quality of life of individuals with developmental disabilities across Ontario. Successful completion of the project is vital to both those currently receiving support and services, and those not yet able to avail themselves of the kinds of services they merit and deserve. In our view, a transformed, stronger and more equitable developmental services sector would unquestionably represent one of the Government's most significant and lasting accomplishments.

OASIS, in addition to making two comprehensive submissions, has participated actively in the consultations undertaken by the Ministry of Community and Social Services on key service delivery issues. OASIS and its members very much appreciate the consultative approach the Ministry has adopted, the assurance that Transfer Payment Agencies will continue to be a cornerstone in providing high quality programs and services in Ontario, and the commitment to address, as an integral part of the Transformation process, the issues and recommendations we have identified as important to strengthen and facilitate the operations of Transfer Payment Agencies.

We recognize that introducing significant changes will present challenges and that it may not be possible to finalize all of the details at the start; indeed, some changes in processes and procedures are likely to require refinement in the years to come. I would like to assure you, in this regard, that OASIS and its members continue to stand ready to provide whatever practical expertise and advice may be deemed necessary.

On behalf of the members of OASIS, I would also reiterate that a stronger and more equitable developmental services sector will require a significant increase in funding on an ongoing basis. The sector remains underfunded, and changes to service delivery arising from the initiative will have to be backed by a commitment to substantial additional resources if a transformed developmental services sector is to gain widespread support and be successful in achieving its objectives.

Sincerely,



Gerry Sutton,
President of OASIS